

## 17. A SNAKE-TOAD INCIDENT

Humayun Abdulali's note [*J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.* 68(2):463] reminds us that during the rainy season of 1966, a male Green Keelback (*Macropisthodon plumbicolor* Cantor) was found struggling inside the campus of the Veterinary Dispensary at Chandaka, Puri District, Orissa. The animal was secured and found to be about 51 cm long and had the left forelimb of a Common Toad (*Bufo melanostictus*) piercing the right abdominal wall at the 66th ventral scale.

It would appear that such accidents occasionally happen and we may also, refer to an interesting note on 'The Biological Control of Dung' in the *Scientific American* for April 1974, p. 179, where D. F. Waterhouse mentions a Dung Beetle (*Onthophagus cuniculatus*) which broke through the body of a small Australian toad which had swallowed it!

ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA,  
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18. MARSH CROCODILE *CROCODYLUS PALUSTRIS*  
IN THE GIR

(With a photograph)

The Indian marsh crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*) has been wiped out in most of its former range. It survives now in only the most remote and protected areas. The following information was obtained through a three day survey of the crocodile population in Kamleshwar Lake inside the Gir Sanctuary, Gujarat, in June, 1974.

Night counts were made on 13-vi-1974 and 16-vi-1974 by slowly walking around the banks of the lake and shining a powerful torch from eye level to catch the eye reflection of crocodiles. On 13-vi-1974 a total of 27 crocodiles were observed from midnight to 4 a.m., 15 on the banks and 12 in the water. On 14-vi-1974 observations made during daylight from the top Kamaleshwar Dam showed seven crocodiles. On the night of 16-vi-1974 a total of 29 crocodiles were spotted between 6 p.m. and midnight, 14 were on land ('night basking') and 15 were in the water.

Some crocodiles were approached within 3 metres but most fled when 12 to 15 metres away. There has been no previous census or studies undertaken on the crocodiles in this lake but it appears to be an

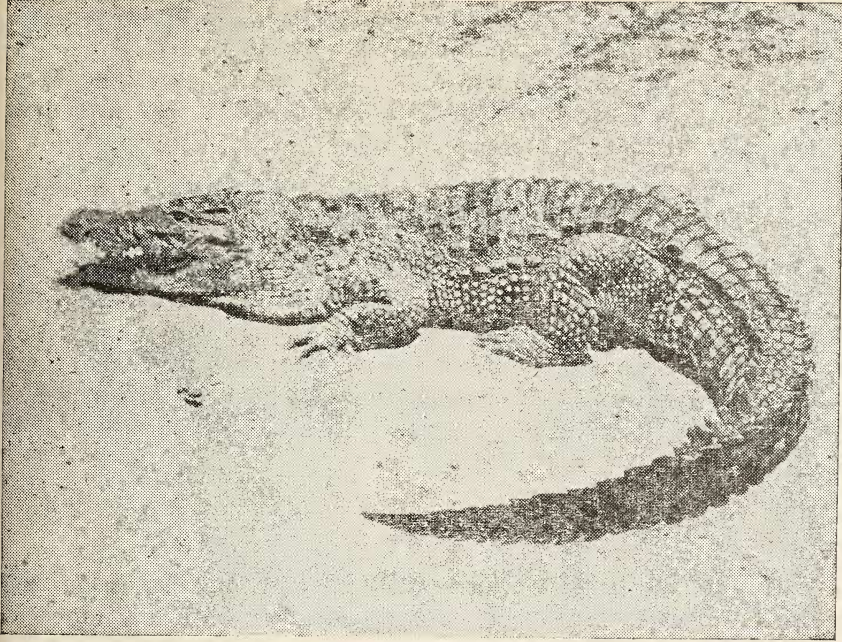


Photo. *Crocodylus palustris* (adult male).

important population that deserves more attention and management as a natural gene pool for this rapidly dwindling reptile.

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#### 19. FURTHER ADDITIONS TO THE FISH FAUNA OF THE CHILKA LAKE

A list of the fish fauna of the Chilka lake numbering 118 given by Hora (1923). Jones & Sujansinghani (1954) considered only 112 as valid species out of the 118 species listed by Hora as six were synonyms of recorded species. Koumans (1941) added one Gobiid fish from the lake, thus bringing the number to 113. Jones & Sujansinghani (op. cit.) presented 25 new records, raising the total number of species recorded from the lake to 138. Later Roy & Sahoo (1957) added 14 more species, bringing the total to 152.

We recorded the following eight additional species from the Chilka lake while operating gill nets in the outer channel, inspecting catches